

Unserved and Underserved Populations

A gross estimate of people who are unserved is based on the approximately 110,000 people in North Carolina (over 40) who have a vision loss. In 2009 the DSB served 3,150 clients... This indicates potential demand far in excess of available services. A similar need is demonstrated by the 286 cases closed status 08 (2009). When this number is removed from those served, there are approximately 2,800 known clients who applied for services and were unserved or underserved.

Recommendation - DSB needs to target the medical community and educate them about DSB services via seminars, lectures in medical schools, and workshops of special interests such as new therapies, treatment protocols, or technology.

Recommendation – DSB needs to better communicate information on available services to target groups including older individuals and minorities.

Recommendation - Internally, DSB needs to educate social workers and independent living counselors about eligibility and services offered through vocational rehabilitation.

Prevalence and Trends in Vision Loss

There are 154,566 people in North Carolina who are 18 and older and experience a vision loss, a figure that represents 2.54% of the population. The leading cause of vision loss in NC is diabetic retinopathy, which disproportionately affects White females, ages 40 and over. Other risk high risk groups include: Blacks for open angle glaucoma and Whites (male and female) for myopia, cataracts, and hyperopia.